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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 28th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 7 May 2007, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Acharya ..... (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 33: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*) (A/61/19 (Part I); A/C.4/61/L.19)

1. **The Chairman** reminded delegates that in its resolution 60/289 of 8 September 2006, the General Assembly had authorized the reconvening in December 2006 of the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. The report of the Special Committee regarding the work of the Working Group had been adopted on 18 December 2006, and was contained in document A/61/19 (Part I).

2. **Mr. El-Sherbini** (Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations), introducing the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, said that it had been adopted at a resumed session of the Special Committee convened to review the outcome of the consideration by the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts of the issues of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Special Committee had decided at its substantive session in March 2006 to consider the following two documents related to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers: the draft United Nations policy statement and draft United Nations comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff or related personnel, contained in document A/60/877, and the revised draft model memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and Member States contributing resources to United Nations peacekeeping operations, contained in document A/61/494. The Special Committee had adopted the recommendations of the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts during a resumed session on 18 December 2006. As the Special Committee had yet to conclude its report on the substantive session of 2007, it had been deemed necessary to issue the report of the 18 December resumed session separately in order to respect the request of the Special Committee and reconvene the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts no later than June 2007.

3. The report of the Special Committee requested the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts to continue consideration of the revised draft model memorandum of understanding at a resumed session to be held no later than June 2007. The report also reiterated the importance of a strategy for victim assistance, and acknowledged that such a strategy could have United Nations-wide application. The Special Committee requested that its Chairman should consult with the Chairman of the Fourth Committee and, as appropriate, the President of the General Assembly, on how to proceed with consideration of the strategy, and reiterated that until a comprehensive strategy for victim assistance was implemented, missions should continue to provide emergency assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse within current mission budgets. The Special Committee further expected the meeting on the draft model memorandum of understanding to be conducted with full conference services, both in the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group and at its plenary meetings.

Draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.19: Comprehensive review of a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations

4. **Ms. Zakharova** (Russian Federation) said that her delegation fully supported the adoption of the draft resolution, but noted that footnote 2 would be more appropriately placed in reference to paragraph 2, rather than paragraph 1 of the text.

5. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolution under the item, as orally amended.

6. **Mr. Zhang** (Secretary of the Committee), speaking with regard to the financial implications of the draft resolution, said that under the terms of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly endorsed the proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations contained in paragraphs 1 to 5 of its report (A/61/19/Part I). With regard to the resumed session of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts requested by the Special Committee to continue consideration of the revised draft model memorandum of understanding, the secretariat of the Special Committee had advised that the Working Group would meet for four days, two meetings per day, for a total of eight meetings with simultaneous interpretation in all six official languages of the United Nations. Documentation requirements were tentatively estimated at 25 pages of post-session documents to be issued in all six official languages of the United Nations. Implementation was estimated to involve an

estimated US$ 152,400 in meeting and common support services, comprising $142,400 in General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management costs under section 2, and $10,000 in Central Support services costs under section 28D. No provisions had been made under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 for servicing the activities of the Working Group as envisaged in the draft resolution; should the draft resolution be adopted, estimated additional conference-servicing and other requirements of $152,400 would arise.

7. Moreover, the Secretariat had sought to identify areas from which resources could be redeployed to meet the requirements arising from the draft resolution in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. It was anticipated that the additional requirements could be accommodated to the extent possible within the resources already appropriated under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. Any additional expenditure that should arise in the implementation of the draft resolution would be reported accordingly in the context of the second performance report of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

8. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.19 without a vote.

9. *Draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.19 was adopted.*

10. **Ms. El Alaoui**, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that it attached great importance to the work of the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts. When the Working Group met in December 2006, the Non-Aligned Movement had stated that assistance to victims was global in scope and should therefore be discussed in consultation with other forums. Delegations had arrived at compromises on certain very important facets of the revised model memorandum of understanding, but to the disappointment of the Non-Aligned Movement and other delegations, it had not been possible to conclude the work in a positive fashion. She stressed that the draft resolution just adopted, enabling the Working Group to continue its work in June of 2007, did not belong to the current session, since it endorsed a report of the second resumed session of 2007. While aware of the technical reasons for the choice of format for the report, that format nonetheless should remind delegations of their duties as Member States vis-à-vis the current inability of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations to adopt its report for 2007. The Non-Aligned Movement noted the existence of that state of affairs with concern, as not only the activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations but also the reforms initiated by the Secretary-General would be adversely affected if the situation were to continue.

11. The Non-Aligned Movement gave precedence to compromise and consensus, the guiding principle and key element of success in peacekeeping activities and the advancement of international peace and security. The Non-Aligned Movement was ready to adopt the report of the Special Committee, and to continue to work in conjunction with its partners and the Secretariat to ensure that peacekeeping activities should continue to be used in the service of peace.

12. **Mr. Apolinar Espinal** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution and expressed approval of the ongoing consideration of the draft model memorandum of understanding. The Group looked forward to the adoption of the report of the 2007 substantive session, as it would contain important recommendations with regard to ways to improve certain aspects of the peacekeeping operations carried out by the United Nations. The Rio Group was prepared to work constructively with the Special Committee so as to achieve positive results as early as possible.

The meeting rose at 3:45 p.m.